

Application No. 10/087,348
Amendment dated July 22, 2003
Reply to Office Action of April 22, 2003

Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (original): A method of manufacturing an implement, comprising:

- (1) providing a first group of engine types and a second group of transmission types at a common, first manufacturing facility;
- (2) selecting a desired module configuration;
- (3) selecting a desired engine from the first group and a desired transmission from the second group;
- (4) connecting the selected engine and transmission together in accordance with the desired module configuration to provide a base of the implement;
- (5) transporting the base of the implement to a second facility;
- (6) providing a working device at the second facility; and
- (7) connecting the working device to the base of the implement at the second facility.

Claim 2 (original): The method of Claim 1, wherein step (1) further comprises providing a third group of steering mechanism types at the common, first manufacturing facility.

Claim 3 (original): The method of Claim 2, wherein step (3) further comprises selecting a desired steering mechanism from the third group.

Claim 4 (original): The method of Claim 3, wherein step (4) further comprises connecting the steering mechanism with the engine and transmission.

Claim 5 (original): The method of Claim 1, wherein the first group includes vertical shaft engines and horizontal shaft engines.

Claim 6 (original): The method of Claim 1, wherein the second group includes hydrostatic transaxles, manual shift transaxles, and friction drive transaxles.

Application No. 10/087,348
Amendment dated July 22, 2003
Reply to Office Action of April 22, 2003

Claim 7 (original): The method of Claim 2, wherein the third group includes a spring clutch and trigger controlled steering mechanism and a bi-directional clutch and intuitive steering mechanism.

Claim 8 (original): The method of Claim 1, further comprising selecting a working device from the group consisting of an auger assembly, a cultivating blade assembly, and a mower blade assembly.

Claim 9 (original): The method of Claim 1, further comprising, after step (7):
 providing a handle at the second facility; and
 attaching the handle to the base of the implement at the second manufacturing facility.

Claim 10 (original): The method of Claim 1, further comprising, after step (4):
 providing at least two wheels at the first manufacturing facility; and
 attaching the wheels to the transmission at the first manufacturing facility.

Claim 11 (original): The method of Claim 1, further comprising, after step (4):
 providing a drive linkage at the first manufacturing facility; and
 attaching the drive linkage at the first manufacturing facility to the base of the implement and selected parts to provide a driving connection therebetween.

Claim 12 (original): The method of Claim 1, wherein, after step (7), a substantially completed implement is produced, and further comprising:
 packaging the substantially completed implement; and
 transporting the substantially completed implement from the second manufacturing facility to one of a wholesaler, a retailer, and a customer.

Claim 13 (original): The method of Claim 1, wherein step (6) further includes providing a drive linkage with the working device.

Claim 14 (original): The method of Claim 13, wherein step (7) includes connecting the drive linkage of the working device to the working device and the base of the implement.

Claim 15 (original): A method of manufacturing an implement, comprising:

- (1) providing a first group of engine types, a second group of transmission types, and a third group of steering mechanism types at a common, first manufacturing facility;
- (2) selecting a desired module configuration;

Application No. 10/087,348
Amendment dated July 22, 2003
Reply to Office Action of April. 22, 2003

(3) selecting a desired engine from the first group, a desired transmission from the second group, and a desired steering mechanism from the third group;

(4) connecting the selected engine, transmission, and steering mechanism together in accordance with the desired module configuration to provide a base of the implement;

(5) transporting the base of the implement to a second facility;

(6) providing a working device at the second facility; and

(7) connecting the working device to the base of the implement at the second facility.

Claim 16 (original): The method of Claim 15, wherein the first group includes vertical shaft engines and horizontal shaft engines.

Claim 17 (original): The method of Claim 15, wherein the second group includes hydrostatic transaxles, manual shift transaxles, and friction drive transaxles.

Claim 18 (original): The method of Claim 15, wherein the third group includes a spring clutch and trigger controlled steering mechanism and a bi-directional clutch and intuitive steering mechanism.

Claim 19 (original): The method of Claim 15, further comprising selecting a working device from the group consisting of an auger assembly, a cultivating blade assembly, and a mower blade assembly.

Claim 20 (original): The method of Claim 15, further comprising, after step (7):
providing a handle at the second manufacturing facility; and
attaching the handle to the base of the implement at the second manufacturing facility.

Claim 21 (original): The method of Claim 15, further comprising, after step (4):
providing at least two wheels at the first manufacturing facility; and
attaching the wheels to the transmission at the first manufacturing facility.

Claim 22 (original): The method of Claim 15, further comprising, after step (4):
providing a drive linkage at the first manufacturing facility; and
attaching the drive linkage at the first manufacturing facility to the base of the implement and selected parts to provide a driving connection therebetween.

Application No. 10/087,348
Amendment dated July 22, 2003
Reply to Office Action of April 22, 2003

Claim 23 (original): The method of Claim 15, wherein, after step (7), a substantially completed implement is produced, and further comprising:

packaging the substantially completed implement; and
transporting the substantially completed implement from the second manufacturing facility to one of a wholesaler, a retailer, and a customer.

Claim 24 (original): The method of Claim 15, wherein step (6) further includes providing a drive linkage with the working device.

Claim 25 (original): The method of Claim 24, wherein step (7) includes connecting the drive linkage of the working device to the working device and the base of the implement.

Claim 26 (new): A method of Claim 1, wherein the second facility is remote from the first facility.
